

# On the aspectual markers of the Udmurt language: Expressions of aspect in dialects

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In my paper, I will discuss the way aspectual markers (modifiers with converbs, derivative suffixes, different tenses, and the object) can contribute to the aspectual meaning of sentences in the Udmurt dialects. Samples are taken from dialectal texts: I will rely on all of the prosaic texts of Kel'makov 2006, supplementing the material with prosaic texts from Kel'makov 1981 as well as from Kel'makov et al. 1981, so that there will be an equal quantity of texts from the Northern, Central, Southern, and Peripheral Southern dialects.

## 1. Aspect and *Aktionsart*

I must first address some central issues relating to the notions of aspect and *Aktionsart*, as there are differing opinions among scholars working in this field. These differences often arise due to the use of different terminology, because there is no generally accepted system and because there are conflicting opinions about the connection between, for example, aspect and *Aktionsart*, or aspect and tenses. Even so, we can say that studies usually list perfective-imperfective opposition as the most important distinction (e.g., Comrie 1976; Smith 1991; Egg 1994; Kiefer 1996, 2006), which can be described using the properties of completeness and divisibility. The perfective denotes a complete situation as a "single whole", "without regard to internal temporal constituency" (Comrie 1976: 12), whereas the imperfective focuses on a part of the situation, regardless of its endpoints (cf. Smith 1991: 73). In connection with this, perfective events have indivisible temporal structures, while imperfectives have divisible ones.

I propose that the possible temporal schemas of imperfective events can be represented in the following ways (there is no information about the beginning or end of the event, so that we do not know whether it was completed):

a) —————

b) —••••—

Correspondingly, here are the possible temporal schemas of perfective events (perfective events are either punctual or they are closed by endpoints from left or right):

a) \_\_\_\_\_ •

b) • \_\_\_\_\_

c) •

Aspect is treated here not as a lexical but as a grammatical category: the internal temporal structure of a sentence is determined not only by the verb, but also by other parts of the sentence (compositional markers). Thus, we can say that aspect is a syntactical (grammatical) category – we can speak about the aspect of verbs only in terms of the added aspectual value of the sentences (cp. Kiefer 2006) – while *Aktionsart* is a lexical category. According to Kiefer (2006), there seems to be a connection between the notions of *Aktionsart* and aspect in the following way: comparing the temporal structure of the verbs, for example, with their prefixed or derived varieties expressing *Aktionsart*, if the internal temporal structure changes, then this *Aktionsart* involves aspectual differences as well.

## 2. Converb constructions in the Volga-Kama area

Converbs with modifiers – i.e., paired verbs – are widely used in the Volga-Kama area in Turkic and Finno-Ugric languages: Mari has at least 36 modifiers, Udmurt at least 35 (relying on Kel'makov 1975 and my corpus), Chuvash about 26, and Tatar about 20 (Bereczki 1998). We cannot know the precise number of these modifiers, because it seems that – at least in the case of Udmurt and Mari – these do not constitute a strictly closed class.

The usage of these constructions is presumably the result of an early Turkic influence on the Finno-Ugric languages: Mari has been influenced by Chuvash and Tatar, and Udmurt mainly by Tatar. The direction of the influence is supported by the fact that there are similar constructions in at least one Samoyedic language, Kamas, which was caused by the influence of Turkic languages, mainly Khakas (Klumpp 2005), and they occur frequently in the other Turkic languages, too (Johanson 1995), which have had no connections with the Volga-Kama area.

The usage of paired verbs in Udmurt dialects differs from that in the literary language: the Southern dialects have more than 25–30 modifiers, but fewer are used in the literary language, and fewer still in Northern dialects. In Mari, they are widely used in dialects as well as the literary languages. In Chuvash, this construction is considered “extremely frequent” (Krueger 1961: 163), so it does not seem to be dependent on dialectal factors.

These constructions have the same structure throughout the area, consisting of a converb and a finite verb (conjugated or derived as needed in the clause).

## 2.1. Adverbial and non-adverbial converb constructions

The converb (gerund/adverbial participle) can be defined as “a nonfinite verb form whose main function is to mark adverbial subordination” (Haspelmath 1995). Considering the converb constructions in the related languages, there are only adverbial connections between the two elements in many cases, such as temporal (1), modal (2) or causal (3) connections:

### (1) Northern (Central Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 1981: 37)<sup>1</sup>

<i>кõн'а</i>	<i>кэ</i>	<i>пукъ-са,</i>	<i>мун'чъ-йа-м</i>	<i>ву</i>
how.much	if	sit-CVB	sauna-ILLAT-Px1SG	water
<i>нър-и-з.</i>				
go.into-1PST-3SG				

‘Sitting for a while, water went into my sauna, too.’

### (2) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 210)

<i>сугон,</i>	<i>нэ,</i>	<i>кõс</i>	<i>эгыр</i>	<i>кисы-йэ</i>	<i>нон-са</i>	<i>нулл-оно</i>
onion	PRT	dry	coal	bag-ILLAT	take-CVB	carry-FUT.PTCP

‘One has to carry the onion, taking it into a dry coal bag.’

### (3) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 1981: 61)

<i>а</i>	<i>мукэт-ыз</i>	<i>кышка-са</i>	<i>нэгз-эм</i>
but	other-Px3SG	get.frightened-CVB	escape-2PST.3SG

‘But the other escaped, getting frightened.’

Despite these cases, the construction composed of a gerund and a conjugated verb is grammaticalized on several occasions: the converb provides the lexical meaning while the finite verb has more or less lost its original meaning and is a modifier (auxiliary) expressing aspect – usually via an *Aktionsart* meaning:

### (4) Central (Kel'makov 1981: 209)

<i>ато</i>	<i>с'ион-лэс'</i>	<i>чэскыт-сэ</i>	<i>умо й_мой</i>	<i>ваа-са</i>
PRT	food-ABL	delicious-ACC.Px3SG	properly	understand-CVB
<i>уд</i>	<i>ву тты</i>			
NEG.FUT.2SG	come.to			

‘Otherwise you won’t properly taste the delicious taste of the food.’

Here, the root of the gerund is *валаны* ‘to understand’. This verb provides the lexical meaning, while the following verb *вуттыны* ‘to carry; to come to, to get somewhere’ has lost its original lexical meaning and expresses only the resultativity (telicity) of the event.

## 2.2. The aspectual role of modifiers in the Udmurt dialects

It has not been easy – sometimes even impossible – to separate adverbial converb constructions from those that are non-adverbial (where the finite

<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the examples are presented in their original written form.



verb is a modifier/auxiliary). This relates to the abstractiveness of modifiers; the question arises whether they are grammaticalized: Do they consistute aspectual markers? This is not a question with a clear yes or no answer: a modifier can lose its own original lexical meaning to different extents in different environments – i.e., with different converbs. For instance, in example (5), there is an adverbial connection between the elements in the converb construction:

(5) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 206)

*кишно-ос      вэрас'кы-са      мын-о*  
 women-PL      talk-CVB      go-PRS.3PL

'The women are going while having a conversation.'

In example (6), the verb *мыныны* 'to go' has a rather obscure meaning (one cannot run and go at the same time):

(6) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 212)

*быс'-са      мын-ны*  
 run-CVB      go-INF

'to run' (lit. 'to go running')

### 2.3. The role of context

A converb construction can easily be misinterpreted for various reasons. It is possible that we do not know whether the finite verb – the base segment of the construction (Johanson 1995: 313) – could be interpreted as an aspectual marker or if we are dealing with an adverbial subordination, where the finite verb maintains its own lexical meaning, and there are not sufficient contextual or pragmatic implications for deciding this. Furthermore, when the finite verb has both an aspectual and a non-aspectual reading, then it is always the case that one cannot determine the actual meaning of the token without any context.

I have conducted corpus-based research on Udmurt dialectal texts and also a modern Udmurt novel (Matveyev 2005), and in many cases, context helped me exclude those converb constructions where the converb is subordinated to the base segment and clearly has an adverbial meaning, while also helping me to identify the grammaticalized ones. For instance, in the following example it is clear from the context that it is not a question of two different events (where one event follows the other): it is not a case of someone squeezing out toothpaste and then taking it out (e.g., out of the bathroom). The text discusses somebody's habits:

(7) (Matveyev 2005: 58)

кин [...]	тювик-ысь	пинь	сузян	паста-ез	наньзаты-са
who	tube-ELAT	tooth	cleaner	paste-ACC	compress-CVB
понтм-э		каллен гинэ			
take.out-PRS.3SG		slowly PRT			

‘who [...] squeezes out (lit. ‘takes out compressing’) the toothpaste from the tube slowly’

In the following example, the context helped me again in deciding whether there were two separate events (they were quarrelling and lying at the same time in the courtyard):

(8) Periph. Southern (Kel’makov 2006: 275)

азбар-ън	тэргаш-са	къл’л’ъ-къ-зъ
courtyard-INE	quarrel-CVB	lie-PTCP-3PL

‘when they were quarrelling (lit. ‘lying quarrelling’) in the courtyard’

Here, the first explanation (that there is an adverbial connection between the two elements of the construction) could be true in a very exceptional situation, but – according to the broader co-text – there was nobody lying in the courtyard, so it can be deduced that the participle derived from the verb ‘to lie’ is an aspectual marker in this case.

## 2.4. The aspectual role of modifiers

Relying on material from the dialectal texts mentioned above, I will now discuss the ways in which modifiers with converbs can contribute to the aspectual meaning of the sentences.

In the related Finno-Ugric and Turkic languages, aspectual meaning is usually expressed via *Aktionsart*:

(9) Udmurt (the same construction exists in Mari: *муралтен колташ*)

кырзаны ‘to sing’	кырзаса лэзъыны ‘to start (lit. ‘to let’) singing’
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Here, the verb ‘to sing’ has no endpoint, but the paired verb, in which the converb ‘singing’ provides the lexical meaning, has a temporal structure closed from the left side: focus is placed on the starting point of the action (inchoative *Aktionsart*).

In terms of the features of aspect and *Aktionsart* introduced above, the aspectual role of modifiers can be described in the following way, relying on the material I have collected from the dialectal texts and one modern Udmurt novel (Matveyev 2005)<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>2</sup> Similar functions can be found for Hungarian preverbs (see, e.g., Kiefer 2006: 48).

**I. Aspectual meaning only (in case of imperfective modifiers)**

(10) Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 224) (riddle)

<i>Пичи гънэ</i>	<i>йэртэчка</i>	<i>гүрээ'</i>	<i>йълти</i>
little PRT	Eurasian.wren	mountain	through

*мискъл'а-са* *вэтл-э.*

slide-CVB walk-PRS.3SG

'Little Eurasian wren slides (lit. 'walks sliding') through the mountain. [A comb.]'

**II. Aktionsart meaning + aspectual meaning (in case of perfective modifiers, and modifiers expressing imperfectivity via frequentative Aktionsart)**(11) Southern (Kel'makov et al. 1981: 55) (*вийыны* 'to kill': intensive Aktionsart)

<i>ад'ами-йээ</i>	<i>бичат-са</i>	<i>вий-э</i>	<i>вал</i>
man-ACC	tickle-CVB	kill-PRS.3SG	COP.1PST

'[Alangasar] used to tickle one to death.'

(12) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 1981: 127) (*быдтыны* 'to finish': resultative Aktionsart)

<i>Картошка</i>	<i>копа-са</i>	<i>бытт-эм-ын</i>	<i>н'и</i>	<i>вал.</i>
potato	dig-CVB	finish-PTCP-INE	already	COP.1PST

'The potato has been dug out (lit. 'has been finished digging') already.'

**III. Meaning of direction + perfective function**

(13) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 1981: 96)

<i>пуны</i>	<i>станции</i>	<i>пала</i>	<i>быз'ы-са</i>	<i>кошк-эм.</i>
dog	station	toward	run-CVB	go.away-2PST.3SG

'The dog ran away (lit. 'went away running') toward the station.'

The question then is which modifiers are common to all of the Udmurt dialects. According to the texts, we can also determine the type and token frequency of the converb constructions in the different dialects. According to Kel'makov 1975, among others, there are more modifiers in the Southern (mainly in Peripheral Southern) dialects than in the Northern dialects, and we can assume that if there are more modifiers, they would also be used more frequently.

The texts I have examined produced the same result: as the table shows below, we can generally say that in the Southern dialects, more modifiers and also more paired verbs are used than in the Northern dialects. Thirteen modifiers appear in the texts of the Southern and Peripheral Southern dialects, fewer appear in Central, even fewer in the dialects from Central



Cheptsa and even fewer still in the dialects from Upper Cheptsa.

The token and type frequency of the paired verbs are almost the same, and they are the most frequent in the Peripheral Southern dialects, less frequent in the Southern and even less so in the Central dialects. However, the frequency of paired verbs is about the same in the Northern dialects from the Central Cheptsa as in the Central dialects. The lowest frequency of paired verbs can be found in the Northern dialects from the Upper Cheptsa.

Frequency (total number)	Upper Cheptsa (Northern)	Central Cheptsa (Northern)	Central	Southern	Periph. Southern
Modifiers (IPFV/PFV)	4 (2/2)	9 (5/4)	11 (5/6)	13 (3/10)	13 (6/7)
Paired verbs (types) (IPFV/PFV)	6 (4/2)	16 (9/7)	16 (7/9)	20 (10/10)	28 (19/9)
Paired verbs (tokens) (IPFV/PFV)	6 (4/2)	16 (9/7)	17 (8/9)	20 (10/10)	28 (19/9)

### 3. On the grammaticalization processes of paired verbs

The development of a verb with lexical meaning into an auxiliary can also be demonstrated in terms of grammaticalization theory. This theory has many interpretations: in a broader sense, grammaticalization means that elements and structures become more grammatical(ized) (Haspelmath 1998: 318), so in this sense, grammaticalization is a “shift from a lexical unit to a grammatical one” (Dér 2010: 190). In a narrower sense, grammaticalization is considered to be a distinct language change which involves more than just the direction of the process (lexical unit > grammatical unit or grammatical unit > more grammatical unit), and in fact includes at least three mechanisms: (1) meaning change, (2) reanalysis, and (3) phonological reduction, and if so, sometimes fusion. (Dér 2010: 190–192.)

#### 3.1. Phonological change

The grammaticalization processes of Udmurt paired verbs do not involve any phonological changes: they have gone through a grammaticalization process without a structural change, in either the converb or the finite verb, the status of which has changed from independent verb to auxiliary. Despite this, in Kamas there is sometimes a phonological reduction as well, in cases where an independent verb becomes an affix:

(14) (Klumpp 2005: 199–200):

<i>nu-laʔ</i>	<i>iʔbə-m</i>	>	<i>nu-laʔbə-m</i>
stand-CVB	lie.AOR-1SG		stand-IPFV.AOR-1SG
'I'm standing.' (lit. 'I'm lying while standing.')			

In Udmurt, some clitical elements – such as a particle, negation verb, or conjuctor – can even intervene between the gerund and the auxiliary verb:

(15) Central (Kel'makov 1981: 207)

<i>Важты-са,</i>	<i>нэ,</i>	<i>кэл'м-о</i>	<i>ай.</i>
explain-CVB	PRT	leave-FUT.1SG	PRT
'I'm going to explain.'			

(16) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 204)

<i>Гужэм</i>	<i>л'ука-са</i>	<i>уэ</i>	<i>у'л-о</i>	<i>вал</i>	<i>ны.</i>
summer	collect-CVB	NEG.PRS.3PL	live-PRS.3PL	COP.1PST	wood
'In summer they didn't use to collect wood.'					

(17) Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 219)

<i>умой</i>	<i>умой</i>	<i>кэн'эшы-са</i>	<i>уэ</i>	<i>кэ</i>	<i>вы-о</i>
well	well	consult-CVB	NEG.PRS.3PL	if	arrive-PRS.3PL
'if they can't consult about it well' (lit. 'if they don't arrive consulting well')					

### 3.2. Grammaticalization as context expansion

With respect to grammaticalization processes, some scholars use the notions of context expansion, repetition, and frequency; I will make use of these theories, because they fit the interpretation of development of paired verb constructions well.

According to Bybee's research, for example, the grammaticalization process can be understood as follows: a construction becomes more and more frequent, and repetition leads to the weakening of semantic force by habituation and automatization. The unit loses specific semantic features, becomes more general in meaning, and at the same time becomes more rigidly fixed in syntactic position (Bybee 1994, 2003). It enables the constructions to be used in new contexts; this is what Himmelmann calls "context expansion", more specifically "host class expansion" (Himmelmann 2004: 31–33). It is therefore important to note that grammaticalization is a process concerning constructions with particular items in them, rather than a process concerning single elements (see, e.g., Bybee 2003, Himmelmann 2004). We can say that "a construction with particular lexical items in it becomes grammaticized, instead of saying that a lexical item becomes grammaticized" (Bybee 2003: 604). In converb constructions, the converb before the modifier provides the context; it is not the textual context but the narrow structural context of the grammaticalized unit. Therefore, we can say that the more kinds of verbs the modifier can be



added to (i.e., the more significant context expansion it has), the more grammatical its meaning is. In other words, a modifier can lose its own original lexical meaning to a different extent in different environments; it is a case of “context expansion”. This means that by examining all classes of converbs that can be added to one modifier, we can describe the assumed grammaticalization paths on the grounds of synchronic units.

According to these, we can summarize the grammaticalization processes of telic movement verbs, or verbs which also have directional meaning, after converbs as follows:

1. Both the converb and the finite verb have lexical meanings.
2. Concerning the finite verb (conjugated and derived as needed in the sentence), one component of the lexical meaning (the direction of the movement) becomes stronger compared to the other components (aspectual meaning + direction meaning).
3. The aspectual meaning (perfectivity) becomes more general. The directional meaning has weakened or disappeared.
4. Finally, the finite verb has an aspectual meaning without directional meaning (via *Aktionsart*) in some cases.<sup>3</sup> Not all modifiers meaning direction have reached this stage, but an example can be found in the Southern dialectal texts:

(18=17) Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 219)

умой	умой	кэн'эшы-са	уэ	кэ	вгу-о
well	well	consult-CVB	NEG.PRS.3PL	if	arrive-PRS.3PL

‘if they can’t consult about it well’ (lit. ‘if they don’t arrive consulting well’)

If a modifier doesn’t have any directional meaning, other meaning components can be generalized. For example, in case of the modifier meaning ‘to lie’, one semantic feature of its meaning (‘to do something without any movement’) becomes stronger compared to the other elements, in which case it has only imperfective meaning. Constructions such as *из'бса къл'л'бнъ* (19) can be interpreted as adverbial constructions, while the same modifier in the paired verbs like (20) and mainly in (21) has a solely aspectual (imperfective) meaning:

(19) Periph. Southern (Kel'makov 1975: 97)

из'б-са	къл'л'б-нъ
sleep-CVB	lie-INF

‘to be sleeping’ or ‘to lie while sleeping’

<sup>3</sup> It is similar to the grammaticalization of the ancient Hungarian preverbs: they occurred first with movement verbs, then with verbs which do not refer to movement; e.g., *ele menven* [‘elmenvén’] (about 1350) ‘going away’, *ely amulas* [‘elámulás’] (1470) ‘wondering’ (D. Máta 1991: 433–434).

(20=8) Periph. Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 275)

<i>азбар-ън</i>	<i>тэргаш-са</i>	<i>къл'л'ъ-къ-зъ</i>
courtyard-INE	quarrel-CVB	lie-PTCP-3PL

'when they were quarrelling (lit. 'lying quarrelling') in the courtyard'

(21) Periph. Southern (Kel'makov 1975: 97)

<i>шът</i>	<i>пӧсьтъ-са</i>	<i>къл'л'ъ-нъ</i>
soup	cook-CVB	lie-INF

'to cook soup' (lit. 'to lie cooking soup')

Another example is *кельтыны* 'to leave something/somebody somewhere'. It can be grammaticalized in constructions like (22), where there is a real 'leaving' event:

(22) Central (Kel'makov 1981: 201)

<i>Баба-йага</i>	<i>сум-и-з</i>	<i>но</i>	<i>гондыр-ез</i>	<i>тышка-са</i>
witch	run.down-1PST-3SG	and	bear-ACC	hit-CVB

*кэл'т-и-з.*  
leave-1PST-3SG

'The witch ran down and hit the bear.' (lit. 'The witch ran down and left the bear hitting.')

But in many cases, the verb 'to leave' has no object argument, and 'somebody leaving something somewhere' is not a possible explanation (\*'I'm going to explain it and leave it after that'):

(23=15) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 207)

<i>Важты-са,</i>	<i>нэ,</i>	<i>кэл'т-о</i>	<i>ай.</i>
explain-CVB	PRT	leave-FUT.1SG	PRT

'I'm going to explain.'

Next I would like to briefly discuss the other aspectual markers in Udmurt, all of which are used in all dialects of Udmurt.

#### 4. The aspectual role of tenses

In Udmurt, one of the functions of the so-called durative preterite tense is to describe a situation which is progressive, so one that "frames another situation" (Comrie 1976: 30). The time reference – the situation that the progressive event frames – can usually be given with a subordinate clause but also with a separate clause, as in (24):

(24) Northern (Kel'makov 1981: 129)

<i>[куа кыз]</i>	<i>азбар-а-мы</i>	<i>лэчк-и-з.</i>
[spirit pine]	courtyard-ILLAT-Px1PL	descend-1PST-3SG

*Ми* *шуд-ис'к-ом* *вал.*  
 we play-PRS-1PL COP.1PST

‘[the pine spirit] (...) descended into our courtyard. We were playing.’

This tense can also, for example, express habitual meaning without progressive meaning – or imperfective aspect without habitual or progressive meaning (for the latter, see Horváth 2012):

(25) Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 222)

*акашка* *дърѣа* *курэкпуз* *буйа-с'к-ом* *вал.*  
 easter time egg paint-PRS-1PL COP.1PST

‘At Easter we used to paint eggs.’

Another compound tense (the so-called future preterite) can also express habituality. It is usually used when the situation happened in the very distant past:

(26) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 211)

*баб-эд* *вѣра-ло-з* *вал*  
 grandmother-Px2SG say-FUT-3SG COP.1PST

‘Your grandmother used to say it.’

In addition to these tenses, the durative preterite derived with the frequentative suffix can express habituality, too:

(27) Central (Kel'makov 2006: 205)

*ыж* *куты-л-ис'к-ом* *вал*  
 sheep grab-FRV-PRS-1PL COP.1PST

‘We used to grab a sheep.’

In one text from the Upper Cheptsä (Northern), the verbs in the simple past tense derived with the frequentative suffix express situations which happen more regularly, so which seem to be habitual:

(28) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 2006: 174)

*та* *праз'и'ик-э* *обэзат'эл'но* *пороз-эз* *ванды-л-и-зы.*  
 this feast-INE certainly bull-ACC cut-FRV-1PST-3PL

‘In this feast, they certainly used to slaughter (lit. ‘cut down’) a bull.’

## 5. Derivative suffixes

In Udmurt, frequentative *Aktionsart* (related to the imperfective aspect) is marked by the suffix *-лы, -ля*, e.g. *учкылыны* ‘to look (more than once)’. The frequentative suffix seems to be productive. In some cases, it does not change the internal temporal structure of the event, although it does in other cases:



учкыны 'to look'

учкылыны 'to look (more than once)'

йӧттыны 'to get somewhere'

йӧттылыны 'to get somewhere  
(more than once)'

There are also non-productive derivative suffixes in Udmurt. Verbs with these derivatives express perfectivity:

копаны 'to dig'

копыштыны 'to dig out'  
(resultative *Aktionsart*)

However, according to the texts I have examined, the perfective aspectual value of the verb meaning 'to dig out' can also be expressed using a paired verb construction with the perfective modifier 'to finish':

(29=12) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 1981: 127)

<i>Картошка</i>	<i>копа-са</i>	<i>бытт-эм-ын</i>	<i>н'и</i>	<i>вал.</i>
potato	dig-CVB	finish-PTCP-INE	already	COP.1PST

'The potato has been dug out already.' (lit. 'The potato has been finished digging already.')

## 6. The role of the object

In Udmurt, there are two types of objects: morphologically marked and unmarked. Based on the examples from Maksimov and Moisio (2003), I thought it might be possible that the unmarked object would usually be used with imperfective paired verbs and the marked with perfective ones, but the examples from the modern Udmurt novel I examined did not support this idea. Despite my earlier studies, in the related dialectal texts one can find only unmarked objects with imperfective paired verbs (the imperfective value is supported by the imperfective tense as well):

(30) Northern (Upper Cheptsä) (Kel'makov 2006: 189)

<i>Л'огор д'ад'-э</i>	<i>тур</i>	<i>шэр-са</i>	<i>нук-э</i>	<i>вал.</i>
Uncle L'ogor-Px1SG	axe	sharpen-CVB	sit-PRS.3SG	COP.1PST

'Uncle L'ogor was sitting sharpening the axe.'

Perfective paired verbs usually occur with marked objects (with the exception of one example):

(31=22) Central (Kel'makov 1981: 201)

<i>Баба-йага</i>	<i>сум-и-з</i>	<i>но</i>	<i>зондыр-ез</i>	<i>тышка-са</i>
witch	run.down-1PST-3SG	and	bear-ACC	hit-CVB

*кэл'м-и-з.*

leave-1PST-3SG

'The witch ran down and hit the bear.' (lit. 'The witch ran down and left the bear hitting.')

## 7. Converb constructions and tenses

Converbs with modifiers expressing imperfectivity occur evidently with the present tense. In the past, they occur with tenses expressing imperfective aspect (here, progressivity), with the durative preterite, for example:

(32) Periph. Southern (Kel'makov 2006: 260)

<i>одик</i>	<i>ныл</i>	<i>анай-эз</i>	<i>доры</i>	<i>лымшыр-э</i>
one	girl	mother-Px3SG	to	dinner-ILLAT

<i>шым</i>	<i>нуы-са</i>	<i>мын-э</i>	<i>былэм</i>
soup	take-CVB	go-PRS.3SG	COP.2PST

'One girl was taking soup to her mother for dinner.'

They can occur also with simple past:

(33) Northern (Central Cheptsas) (Kel'makov 2006: 41)

<i>йун</i>	<i>мън-эм-э</i>	<i>номъ-са</i>	<i>ул-и</i>
very	go-PTCP-Px1SG	go.out-CVB	live-1PST.1SG

'I wanted very much to go.'

(Note that an expression consisting of an *-(Э)м* participle with Px and *номыны* 'go out' means 'to want to do sg'.)

Perfective converb constructions occur with simple past as well:

(34) Northern (Central Cheptsas) (Kel'makov 1981: 37)

<i>уас'къ-са</i>	<i>но</i>	<i>ой</i>	<i>вуттъ,</i>	<i>зоръ-нъ</i>
descend-CVB	PRT	NEG.1PST.1SG	come.to	rain-INF

*кутск-и-з*

start-1PST-3SG

'I hadn't come down yet (lit. 'I hadn't come to descending yet'), when it started to rain.'

In other cases, they occur with future tense:

(35) Northern (Upper Cheptsas) (Kel'makov 1981: 162)

<i>вала-са</i>	<i>уд</i>	<i>бытты</i>
understand-CVB	NEG.FUT.2SG	finish

'You won't understand.' (lit. 'You won't finish understanding.')

However, in some cases, the imperfective durative preterite occurs with perfective converb constructions. In this case, we can assume that it is a telic event which is repeated frequently in the past and is thus habitual:

(36=11) Southern (Kel'makov et al. 1981: 55)

<i>ad'amu-йэз</i>	<i>бучам-са</i>	<i>вуй-э</i>	<i>вал</i>
man-ACC	tickle-CVB	kill-PRS.3SG	COP.1PST

'[Alangasar] used to tickle one to death.'

## 8. Conclusions

According to the texts I have examined, more modifiers and paired verbs are used in the Southern dialects than in the Northern dialects. These paired verb constructions can occur with different tenses. The simple past seems to be aspectually neutral, as it occurs with both perfective and imperfective converb constructions. The imperfective past tenses, at least the durative preterite, usually occur with imperfective converb constructions, but also with perfective ones, when the perfective event is habitual.

I plan to offer a more precise description of the multiple roles and the frequency of the tenses and the frequentative suffix, as well as their occurrence with other expressions of aspect in the Udmurt dialects. I also plan to examine these factors in the case of the adverbials as well, as we may assume that the role of adverbials as a means of expressing aspectual distinctions is more important in those dialects where paired verbs are less frequently used.

## Abbreviations

ABL – ablative	IPFV – imperfective
ACC – accusative	NEG – negation verb
AOR – aorist	PL – plural
COP – copula	PFV – perfective
CVB – converb	PRS – present
ELAT – elative	PRT – particle
FRV – frequentative	1PST – witnessed past
FUT – future	2PST – unwitnessed past
ILLAT – illative	PTCP – participle
INE – inessive	Px – possessive suffix
INF – infinitive	SG – singular



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